

# CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD

## DESIGN ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 7, 2005, at 3:00 PM

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Large Conference Room

City Administration Building

202 C Street, San Diego, CA

*The Design Assistance Subcommittee is a subcommittee of the City of San Diego's Historical Resources Board. It is primarily composed of Historical Resources Board members who are design professionals with expertise in historic preservation. The Subcommittee provides an informal atmosphere in which presenters can discuss issues related to historic resources. The Subcommittee is not a voting entity, but rather a forum for discussing issues and solutions related to historic resources and their preservation. Comments on a project concept at the meeting does not predispose future positions on the project by the Historical Resources Board. After a brief staff introduction to a project, applicants will be allowed up to 10 minutes for their presentation, which should be focused on the issues affecting the integrity of the historic resource. Applicants are encouraged to engage in an open dialogue regarding the changes that they propose to make to the historic resource and to seriously consider the Subcommittee members' comments before finalizing their project plans.*

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties shall be used as guidelines in evaluating alterations, changes or potential relocation or demolition of historic resources.*

*Members of the public will be allowed an opportunity to speak, for up to one minute each, at the end of the Subcommittee's discussion on a project. Each member of the public is required to state their name and the organization (if any) that they represent prior to their one minute presentation.*

## MEETING AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Public Comment (on matters not on the agenda)
3. Various Issues:
  - 1425 Market Street/The Tourist Hotel: The two-story Tourist Hotel building, built in 1880, is on the Centre City survey as potential National Register eligible building, and an adjacent smaller restaurant building, the "Gem Café", (now a Mexican restaurant) is on the draft African American survey. At the August 3, 2005 DAS meeting a project was proposed by Jim Tanner, architect. At the November 2, 2005 Mr. Tanner presented changes in response to comments made at the August meeting. As suggested by the applicant and requested by the subcommittee at the November meeting, an on-site Tourist Hotel visit with both occurred on November 8, 2005. The Meeting Notes from this site visit are included as an attachment to this agenda. (30 minutes)
  - Doemeny Residence, 4156 Hilldale Road, Kensington: This potentially historic structure (a potential contributor to a district) is an intact 1930 Spanish Eclectic style house that is proposing several changes, most of which are at the rear of the structure, or set back on the side of the structure, that are consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards. There is, however, a proposed addition to the right side of the front of the house to accommodate a new breakfast nook. The currently proposed design may or may not

meet the Standards, and the DAS will discuss this issue and advise the applicants. (20 minutes)

- Hamilton Apartments: 941 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This property was designated by the Board on August 25, 2005. The applicant/owner, Pointe of view developments, would like to discuss how all or a part of the resource might be incorporated in the new development proposed for this block. (20 minutes)
- Ed Fletcher Real Estate Office: 1018 9<sup>th</sup> Ave, HRB Site #655. This site was designated under Criterion B only, for Mr. Fletcher. The owner is proposing demolition of the structure. Is a site commemoration (plaque or?) adequate mitigation for the proposed demolition? (20 minutes)
- The Powerpoint presentation of reconstructed historic resources that was presented to the Policy Subcommittee on November 14, 2005 will be made by staff. (30 minutes)

#### 4. Adjourn

Next Subcommittee Meeting will be on Date at 3:00 PM.

Attachment: Meeting Notes, Tourist Hotel Site Visit, November 8, 2005

Below are the final meeting notes from the Tourist Hotel walk-through on 11/10/05. The building descriptions are unchanged from the first draft, but the Summary of Discussion section at the end is new. These notes are intended to help identify concerns and issues in order for the DAS to make recommendations at the 12/7/05 DAS meeting.

#### TOURIST HOTEL (ca. 1880)

All of the main spaces were available for viewing, however, most of the upper floor rooms were locked. The south yard was accessed to view the rear façade.

#### Exterior:

1. The storefronts are 90% intact, including wood frames, fluted pilasters, prismatic transoms, brick bulkheads, interior bead-board, most of the entry doors and hardware.
2. Most of the wood double-hung windows are intact on the front (north) and side elevations. The casework/trim is also intact.
3. The upper facades are intact, including ship-lap redwood siding, balcony, rail, cornice, and brackets.
4. There is evidence that the east portion of the façade was added when the building was expanded. This expansion likely took place prior to 1920. The profile of the siding and the architectural detailing slightly vary between the two periods.
5. The rear façade has been heavily modified and lacks integrity.
6. There was evidence of structural problems at the west wall, likely termite or dry-rot damage to the framing.
7. The rear exterior stair was not historic.

8. The overall condition of the exterior is fair to good.

Interior:

1. Stair: The main stairway is 95% intact, including bead-board walls, wood steps, trim, newel posts, and handrail.
2. First floor: Most of the first floor spaces have been gutted, so they exhibit few intact features. They have scored concrete floors. However, the "breezeway" corridor between the two wings still has most of the ship-lap walls and wood windows intact.
3. Mezzanine level: Aside from a few miscellaneous doors, there was little intact historic fabric at the mezzanines.
4. Upper floor: Most of the room doors have been replaced, but much of the casework/trim is intact.
5. Most of the upper floor corridor and room walls remain and the historic hotel room layout is intact. The floors were carpeted.
6. The corridor between the two wings has most of the ship-lap walls and doors and wood windows intact. A green fiberglass skylight was added above the former open-air corridor in recent years.
7. No historic light fixtures were found.
8. The overall condition of the interior is fair to good.

GEM CAFÉ (pre-1920)

Since HRB staff did not request it, the interior of the Gem Café was locked and not accessible. Karen Huff insisted that another visit be planned to view the interior.

Exterior:

1. It appears as though the original front façade has been stuccoed-over.
2. The lower façade has textured tile that has been painted over. It appears that this tile is from a later "facelift" and dates from the 1930s or 40s.
3. The current door and glazing are replacements.

Interior:

1. There is wood paneling visible at the interior, but it is not known if it's original or a later addition.

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

After the tour, there was a discussion among committee members and architect Jim Tanner about the buildings. Mr. Tanner suggested that any reuse of the Hotel would require gutting of the interiors, resulting in the loss of much of the remaining historic fabric. Mr. Tanner pushed for his earlier plan to

save only the street facade.

Mr. Tanner was asked about the developer's low income unit obligation which he said was approximately 10 units. DAS members suggested that the developer could use the existing Hotel structure for that purpose, freeing up the new tower for higher-end units. This approach was used for the recent Paseo de Mission Hills project.

The fact that the upper floor of the Hotel had an intact corridor and room layout convinced several DAS members that the Hotel retained its historic integrity and the interiors should not be demolished. Since the current Hotel rooms are so small, the DAS suggested that common walls between some of the rooms could be removed to create larger units. It was noted that the Hotel could be rehabilitated for residential use per the State Historical Building Code and it wouldn't need to meet current California UBC requirements. There may not even need to be an elevator added because there would be no change of use.

Diane Kane brought up the continuing debate of what is preservation and what is mitigation for a lost building. The DAS members still felt strongly that keeping only the façade wasn't appropriate and would lead to the Hotel's loss of designation.

There wasn't much discussion about the Gem Café. Karen Huff was still adamant about the Gem's historic value, but the DAS members haven't seen any documentation that confirmed the Gem's significance, either architecturally or related to black history.

The Tourist Hotel and Gem Café will be discussed again at the 12/7/05 DAS meeting.

Karen Huff asked that the following be added to the record:

The CCDC (Mooney Study) notes the Gem Cafe as a contributing African American site. DAS is expecting additional information from the Black Historical Society that would enhance the African American significance of the site.

For more information, please contact Michael Tudury at (619) 533 6227